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14 April 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD:

SUBJECT: The CUBELA Trial

Briefly, Rolando Cubela Secades has been in personal contact with staffers of this agency in 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964 and, for the last time, in February 1965 shortly prior to his return to Cuba.

The Record of Cubela's long conversation with Manuel Artime Buesa on 30 December 1964 (reported by Artime via Nestor Sanchez in the attached Memo dated 3 January 1966) clearly indicates the extent of Cubela's probings and high-level military contacts and his attempts to form an internal group which would work together to form a non-Communist government in Cuba in the event of Fidel Castro's demise.

During the reported conversation of the trial, there is no indication whatsoever that Cubela revealed anything more than his "weakness, playboy attitude" et cetera in plotting with a man like Artime to assassinate Castro. Under private interrogation to date there is no known possibility that Cubela has revealed the names of the real military leaders with whom he really was in contact and with whom he discussed the overthrow of Castro, because none of these major individuals, whose names are known to us, have been arrested or detained. Ameijeiras, of course, does fall in this category. However he, like Juan Nuiy Sanchez and Victor Bordon Machado who are reportedly arrested, falls in the category of known personal friends of Cubela. The other military leaders whom Cubela contacted who have not been arrested are apparently not known to be personal or close friends or acquaintances of Cubela. Among the latter are Vice Minister of the Armed Forces and Chief of the General Staff Cmdte. Belarmino Castilla Mas and the former chief, Cmdte. Dr. Sergio del Valle Jimenez, who is still a Vice Minister of the FAR and a member of the Political Bureau of the CCCP; a third member of this group was Cmdte. Guillermo Garcia Frias, former Chief of the Army of the West but currently a member of the Political Bureau of the CCCP. Garcia Frias has been almost constantly with Fidel Castro, even on travels throughout the island, and for this reason was replaced as Commanding Officer of the Army of the West in the past few months.

Several careful readings of the entire proceedings of the trial appear to indicate that as soon as Cubela learned the extent of the regime's knowledge of the plot to assassinate the Premier he adopted an immediate line of defense his own "weakness, emotional instability, deterioration, liking for gay parties, the 'dolce vita' life" et cetera, as the common denominator to make himself and the few friends known to be involved through the betrayal by AMHAM-1 as the sole "responsibles" for the plot. When asked had he been

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in communication with his arrested friends since 28 February 1966, he said "No, but I imagine that they must be profoundly analyzing everything I am saying here because it is the result of my deep meditation during my deserved imprisonment where the only thing one does is think and think - seeking the reason for one's behavior which has led one to that condition".

That QUHOPS-1 (Jose Luis Gonzalez Gallarreta) and Alberto Blanco Romariz (AMLASH-3) got this message was very evident - for while they revealed minor facts about the Madrid meetings with Artime which could only have been of their own knowledge, both managed to mention that although Cubela at times talked of the assassination they were "sure Rolando could never really do something like that". And "that he appeared at other times determined and at others very indecisive about the plan".

Cubela has been reported by several sources to have been drugged. The clear, precise, careful, educated statements he made throughout the trial do not bear this comment out to any degree. A handwriting analysis done by Mrs. Hall of TSD in April 1965 bears out many of the underlying subtleties he showed in the trial. To quote a few: "He is a cool and calculating observer who relates the smallest details to their larger aspects".....Most people in his environment may not even be aware of his astuteness and vigilance, as he may intentionally convey the impression of being preoccupied with his own thoughts."..... Basically rather impressionable, he makes strong efforts at concentrating on what he is doing, shutting out all possible distractions and diversions"....."He possesses great facility in expressing himself in word and script. He has some skill in adjusting his style to that of the people he is talking to. While he can be rather eloquent, he is not likely to divulge anything which should be kept secret"....."He has his feelings and impulses under the strictest control. He is a role player who may appear more natural and spontaneous than he actually is"....."He can exercise various deceptive mechanisms in the most adroit fashion, and while demonstrating a smooth behavior".